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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
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| 10/591,596 | 06/04/2007 | Didier Massonnet | 065691-0468 | 3385 |

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| EXAMINER |
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O'HARA, BRIAN M

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| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
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3644

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03/04/2010

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

| | | | |
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| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/591,596 | Applicant(s) MASSONNET, DIDIER | |
| | Examiner Brian M. O'Hara | Art Unit 3644 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 November 2009.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 10-12 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. **Claims 2, 7, 8, and 9** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The use of the phrase "the telescope" renders the claims indefinite because it is unclear if a telescope is being claimed as part of the autonomous device. Since claim 1 does not positively claim the telescope as part of the device, it is impossible to determine the size of an observation aperture.
2. Regarding claim 8, it is unclear what device according to claim 1 is being claimed. Is it the autonomous device? Is it the observation telescope?
3. Claim 9 is rejected for being dependant upon rejected claim 8.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. **Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kustas et al. (US Patent 6,585,193 B1).** Kustas et al. discloses an autonomous device (10) for blanking out the light radiation emitted by at least one star, wherein the device includes control means (90) for controlling a propulsion means (36) for moving or stopping the device in space and/or in a pseudo-orbit in space around an observation

Art Unit: 3644

telescope that includes an observation aperture (since the spacecraft has a controller and thrusters it is inherently capable of moving in a pseudo-orbit around a telescope), wherein the device includes a blanking screen (70; "occulting membrane" See Column 2, Line 36), with the control means of the propulsion means being also for positioning the screen on a line of sight between the telescope and the star during a period of observation, so that the light radiation from the star is at least partially blanked from the observation aperture of the telescope during the observation period.

6. Regarding claims 2-7, Kustas et al. further discloses one blanking dimension of the screen (70) is of the order of magnitude of the observation aperture of the telescope (See Column 5, Line 10; 2,500 m² is on the order of a typical radio telescope; Kustas et al. also discloses nano-satellites which would have smaller membranes); wherein the screen is flexible ("thin film" and "deployable"; See Column 5, Lines 1-10); the screen includes means designed to deploy or fold the screen (18); means for moving (inflating mechanism used to inflate the struts) the screen in relation to the device in order to modify the degree of blanking of the light from the star in relation to the observation aperture of the telescope; radio responders ("communication systems"; commonly radio based; See Column 8, Line 59); and the propulsion means (36) are also for position the device in a pseudo-orbit around the telescope.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 10-12 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian M. O'Hara whose telephone number is (571)270-5224. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 10am - 5pm except the first Friday of every Bi-week.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael R. Mansen can be reached on (571)272-6608. The fax phone

Art Unit: 3644

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michael R Mansen/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3644

/B. M. O./
Examiner, Art Unit 3644